

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Applicant herewith submits a Replacement Sheet for FIGS 11 and 12. The attached ink line drawing replaces the photograph of FIG. 12, which depicted the corrosion which is attributed to the existence of a "stagnation area" where the fluids remain almost still.

Applicants also offer an amended the Abstract of the Disclosure to both shorten its word count and point out features being claimed herein. No new matter has been added.

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the technical objections to the specification made in the outstanding Office Action

Claims 21-34 are pending in the application. Claims 21, 23, and 28 are independent.

Claims 21-34 were objected to and rejected technically as containing certain informalities, as particularly noted by the Examiner. Claims 21-33 have been amended to clarify features of the subject invention and to avoid any questions as to antecedent bases for terms used in each claim. Support for these changes can be found in the original application, as filed. No new matter has been added. Claims 21 and 28 also have been corrected consistent with paragraph [055] and original claim 1, for example, and now clarify that the male thread is complete on a connecting element. It is the female thread which is incomplete on the first end of a hollow rod.

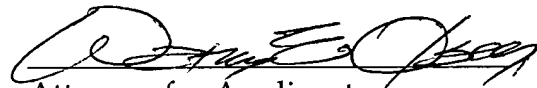
Claims 21-34 were rejected substantively solely under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting, in view of claims 1-20 of the parent application, now U.S. Patent No. 6,674,108. This rejection is obviated by the attached Terminal Disclaimer.

Applicants submit that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Attached is a check for payment of the recordal fee for the attached Terminal Disclaimer.

Any additional fee required to render this Amendment complete or timely is to be charged to Deposit Act. 06-1205

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, DC office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.


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Attachments:

Replacement Sheet for FIGS. 11 and 12
Terminal Disclaimer and Check